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Rural Outdoor Recreation Issue

BOY SCOUTS DEVELOP RECREATION FEATURE IN KANSAS WATERSHED PROJECT

A 400-acre lake to be formed behind a new flood detention dam in the Kansas Twin Caney Watershed project will be the recreation focal point of the 2,000-acre Quivira Scout Ranch.

Five separate camps will be built around the lake and will serve 15,000 scouts. The Quivira Council of Boy Scouts will contribute \$107,000 toward the cost of the \$487,600 flood retarding dam to enlarge it for recreation use.

In addition to helping groups such as the Quivira Council develop watersheds for private recreational use, the Small Watershed Act as amended in 1962 makes possible cost-sharing for public recreation purposes.

As of July 1, 1964, local sponsors of 73 watershed projects in 31 States have requested Soil Conservation Service help with 80 recreational developments for public use in their projects. These developments will create thousands of acres of water and open up more than 35,000 acres of land for public recreation uses.

IOWA BARN NOW SPORTS SHOWER STALLS AND SNACK BAR

A nine-acre, clear water pond replaced hay and crops; a transplanted windmill was transformed into a platform diving tower; and, in a nearby barn, there's a snack bar where the grain bin used to be and shower stalls where cows were once stanchioned--all part of Frank Haberman's effort to convert 58 acres of his 190-acre farm near Waukee, Iowa, into an outdoor recreation area.

Word spread about Haberman's plans and before he could formally open his recreation area July 4, about 300 people showed up one hot June weekend to look the place over. Waukee is about 15 miles west of Des Moines.

With the help of USDA's pilot Cropland Conversion Program, which is administered by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Haberman diverted 58 acres from crop production and built an earth dam which created the nine-acre farm pond. Before water backed up behind the new dam, Haberman imported 750 tons of sand to create a beach. He stocked the pond with 2,000 bass.

Seven other Iowa farmers have decided to shift cropland out of production and into recreation with the assistance of the Cropland Conversion Program. Nationally, 123 farmers in 33 States signed 10-year agreements to convert 8,344 acres of cropland to outdoor recreation under this pilot program.

ILLINOIS LIVESTOCK FARMER "PLANTS" NEW CROP THIS SPRING -- RECREATION

On their livestock farm near Effingham, Illinois, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Van Alst this year are looking forward to a bumper "crop"--recreation. This spring, they finished "planting" a new 42-acre recreation area which includes tent camping sites, a five-acre pond "equipped" with fish and a sandy beach for swimmers, a bathhouse, a trailer park and picnic grounds.



The Van Alsts received financial and technical help from USDA on their new recreation venture.

In the Fall of 1962, Congress authorized the Department of Agriculture to make loans to farmers developing income-producing recreation enterprises on their farms.

Since then, 218 farmers in 44 States have borrowed about \$1.7 million from USDA's Farmers Home Administration to finance recreation enterprises such as fishing for a fee, sports and camping areas, cabins and cottages, hunting preserves, travel trailer parks, and vacation farms. The loans, of course, must be repaid with interest.

VIRGINIA FARMER TURNS SPORT INTO PAYING VENTURE

J. Acree Devin, near Wylliesburg, Virginia, has turned a "hobby" into a business that grosses about \$25,000 and provides jobs for 12 people during the hunting season.

Last season Devin had 350 hunters. Hunters pay \$45 a day for meals, lodging, use of dogs, a guide and can bag up to eight quail. Devin also dresses, packs and freezes the birds. Hunters pay extra to bag additional quail, chukars, pheasants, or turkeys. Devin began raising and releasing game birds to provide better hunting for himself and a few friends.

Devin worked out a conservation plan for his 600-acre farm with the help of USDA's Soil Conservation Service so that the 20,000 game birds he releases annually will have good feed and cover. Each year, Devin plants about 30 acres in small plots to provide the feed. He also has 200 acres of cover and four small ponds. Devin hatches and releases about 18,000 quail and 2,000 chukars, ducks, pheasants and turkeys.



Devin figures he has invested about \$75,000 in his hunting enterprise and that he nets \$11,000 per year.

The idea of recreation-for-pay is catching on with farmers across the country. In 1963, USDA technicians helped 9,845 farmers convert 237,691 acres of cropland to recreation use.

NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY FINDS RECREATION HAS MANY BENEFITS

Folks in Dexter, New Mexico, knew their town had recreation potential. Nearby was a 40-acre lake and some vacant land next to a five hole golf course.

Local people formed a non-profit rural organization--The Lake Van Community Club--rolled up their sleeves and went to work. Local businessmen donated equipment and material and the Lake Van Community Club borrowed \$70,000 from the Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration to build a recreation center complete with swimming pool, bathhouse, nine-hole golf course, caretaker's house, picnic tables and fireplaces.

The influx of people coming to the center has increased business on Main Street. The clubhouse, which is part of the recreation center, is open to public use on a rental basis for community functions.

Since Congress authorized USDA to make loans to non-profit rural associations to help finance community recreation projects late in 1962, 78 non-profit rural associations in 26 States have borrowed about \$7.7 million.

NATIONAL FORESTS EXPECT 135 MILLION RECREATION VISITS THIS YEAR

Recreation use of the National Forests is climbing at about 10 percent per year--from 113 million visits in 1962; to 123 million visits in 1963; and projected for 1964 are 135 million visits.

The 154 National Forests administered by USDA's Forest Service in 39 States and Puerto Rico now have about 68,000 picnic and camping units capable of serving 255,000 people at one time. Visitors are served by about 700 businesses owned by private concessionaires with special use permits. The concessionaires have invested about \$75 million and have an annual net sales of about \$40 million. Some of the most successful concessions are operated in winter sports areas.



Tourists mean increased incomes to local businessmen in areas surrounding the National Forests. They buy gasoline, food and other supplies, rent boats and horses, hire guides and need other services. The Department estimates that two dozen tourists a day for a year equals the spending power of an industrial plant with a \$100,000 a year payroll.

The 10 most popular National Forests for outdoor recreation in 1963 were: Black Hills National Forest in South Dakota and Wyoming; Lower Michigan National Forest in Michigan; Wasatch National Forest in Utah; San Bernardino, Inyo, Angeles, and Eldorado National Forests in California; White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire; George Washington National Forest in Virginia; and, Ocala National Forest in Florida.

TEXAS COUNTY AIMS FOR \$50,000 POTENTIAL INCOME FROM HUNTERS

S. J. Braselton, Jr., chairman of the RAD Planning Committee in Motley County, Texas, says: "I figure we're giving away \$50,000 worth of hunting a year," and he thinks it is time to stop.

So farmers and ranchers in the country are making plans to protect and improve their wildlife recreational resource with cost-share help from USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and technical advice from the Soil Conservation Service to establish wildlife food plots with cover and travel-ways and build dual-use ponds for stock and fish; and, at the same time add to their incomes by charging a hunting fee.

Sportsmen come from Lubbock and other plains-country cities to hunt deer, wild turkey, quail, doves and some antelope in Motley County's rough Canyon country.

Wild plum and grape thickets in the draws, partridge pea, croton weed and other native plants attract the game. The new food plots, in well-selected places, add to the fare millet, cowpeas, vetch, rye, and sorghums.



Outdoor recreation is big business in the Lone Star State. According to economists at the Texas A & M University, Texans more than doubled the amount of time they spent in hunting and fishing during the last five years of the fifties. They spent \$383 million on these sports alone, as one out of every three Texans over 12 years old (2.4 million) took to field and stream with gun and rod.

The Department of Agriculture provides conservation cost-sharing and technical assistance in helping farmers establish wildlife habitat areas. Nationally in the past two years (1962, 1963) USDA's Agricultural Conservation Program has helped farmers provide for wildlife; cover on about 17,500 acres; about 2,000 acres of shallow water areas; and, about 2,000 ponds.

RAD COMMITTEES IN SEVERAL STATES LOOK INTO FARM VACATIONS

In Ohio, the Monroe County rural development committee helped the "Switzerland of Ohio Farm Vacations Association" get started in 1959. After studying their possibilities, a dozen farm families formed an association to cooperatively promote farm vacations. The county extension agent helped the association put together a brochure describing their facilities for vacationists.

Their idea worked. Within two years, three other counties organized associations. Ohio now has 12 local groups and a State organization promoting farm vacations. In a recent USDA study of farm vacations in East Central Ohio, families who had been in the business two years or more reported an annual net income from the farm vacation enterprise ranging from \$150 to \$1,500.

After a trip last fall to see how the Ohio associations worked, the tourist subcommittee of the North-Central Arkansas Area Development Council helped 14 families form the Arkansas Ozark Farm Vacation Association. The association, operating on a pilot basis this year, has published a farm vacation brochure.

In Northeastern Pennsylvania this May, the Endless Mountains Area Development Association assisted about 50 vacation farm owners in a four-county area organize an association to update and improve their businesses.

LAKE CREATED BY WISCONSIN CO-OP DAM SET FOR RECREATION DEVELOPMENT

Nearly 5,000 people turned out for the opening of a recreation project on Wisconsin's Lake Flambeau, Sunday, June 21. The 2,000-acre lake was created 13 years ago when the Dairyland Power Cooperative built a \$6 million dam on the Flambeau River.

Even though the lake bed was treeless, development of the privately-owned shoreline was slow. Now, a private development corporation has started construction of a 450-home planned community that will include a golf course, marina, playground, riding stable, ball diamond, swimming pool, bathing beach and tennis court. The lake was created to generate power for electric cooperatives in the area.

In addition to helping local people find sources of credit for rural development work, local electric cooperatives can, under certain conditions, borrow money from USDA's Rural Electrification Administration to help finance electrical machinery and equipment for rural outdoor recreation enterprises which are unable to find capital elsewhere.